## Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

## **Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A heating element for heating a portion of a semiconductor fabrication furnace, comprising:

a base ring having a one coil recess;

a coil situated within the one coil recess; and

an insulating block affixed to the base ring, the insulating block being

## permanently attached to the base ring; and

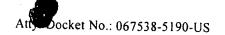
an insulating spacer removably placed between the insulating block and a second adjacent insulating block, wherein

the heating element surrounds substantially less than the entirety of the furnace.

- 2. (original) The heating element of claim 1, wherein the heating coil is removably situated within the coil recess.
- 3. (original) The heating element of claim 1, wherein the insulating block is located directly behind the heating coil.
- 4. (original) The heating element of claim 1, wherein the base ring and insulating block are both made from the same insulating material.

- 5. (original) The heating element of claim 4, wherein the insulating material is a vacuum-formed silica fiber and aluminum composite.
  - 6. (cancelled).
- 7. (currently amended) The heating element of claim  $\frac{6}{1}$ , wherein the heating element is configured for low-temperature operation.
- 8. (currently amended) The heating element of claim  $\frac{1}{2}$ , wherein the heating element is configured for medium-temperature operation.
- 9. (currently amended) The heating element of claim  $\frac{6}{1}$ , wherein the heating element is configured for high-temperature operation.
  - 10. (cancelled).
- 11. (previously presented) The heating element of claim 1, wherein the insulating spacer is temporarily placed during operation of the heater element.
- 12. (currently amended) The heating element of claim € 1/2, further comprising an auxiliary insulating cylinder, comprising:

an exterior cylindrical shell sized to fit about the combination of the base ring and at least one insulating block; and



an interior insulator sized to fit between the block and an adjacent insulating block.

13. (original) The heating element of claim 12, wherein:

the inner surface of the exterior cylindrical shell contacts the outer surface of the insulating block and outer surface of the adjacent insulating block; and

the inner surface of the interior insulator contacts the outer surface of the base ring.

14. (previously presented) A method for heating and insulating a semiconductor fabrication furnace, comprising:

determining a desired operating temperature;

in response to determining a desired operating temperature, selecting a corresponding heater element configuration;

placing a first and second heater element having the proper configuration about the furnace, the first heater element corresponding to a first and second temperature zone;

detecting a temperature fluctuation in the first temperature zone;

increasing power to at least one coil in the first and second heater elements in order to increase the operating temperature of the furnace; and

in response to increasing power to the at least one coil, adding an insulation spacer to the first and second heater elements.

15. (cancelled).

- 16. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 further comprising:

  detecting that a heater coil in the first heater element is no longer functioning; and
  in response to detecting the non-functioning heater coil, replacing the first heater
  element while leaving the second heater element in place.
  - 17. (cancelled).
- 18. (previously presented) The method of claim 14 further comprising:
  increasing power to the at least one coil in order to increase the operating temperature of the furnace; and

in response to increasing power to the at least one coil, placing an auxiliary insulating cylinder about the first and second heater elements.

- 19. (cancelled).
- 20. (cancelled).